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Two Sections

Writer Rings Up 'Double-Oh 7'

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RENDEZVOUS WITH CITY CIA MAN

By JIM KLOBUCHAR
Minneapolis Star Staff Writer

Her voice was velvet and accommodating. It had lift, sociability and a telephone number.

"This," said the CIA secretary, "is 332-4 double-oh 7. What can we do for you?"

An instant image swam before the caller. Her voice had a controlled vitality, a nudging sense of adventure, a vague suggestion of mystery that surely meant she was sitting there at her outer-office desk in her lissome legs, mini-skirt and bon bons.

How was I to know she was answering from the bad-air basement of the Minneapolis post office building? I didn't even know whether she chews Clorets.

"Clearly," I said, "clearly this is some kind of inter-office joke, that the Minneapolis CIA recruiting agent would have a telephone number of 332-4007—the last three digits of which were shamelessly cribbed from another agent?"

"You paid the dime, sir," she said thickly smiling. "And you got 332-4007."

Her Style

It was not so much her smile as her style. She did not say 4007, but rather 4 double-oh 7.

"Is this authorized?" I asked.

"All I can tell you," she said, "is that it is memorized. Did you wish to speak to Mr. Curran?"

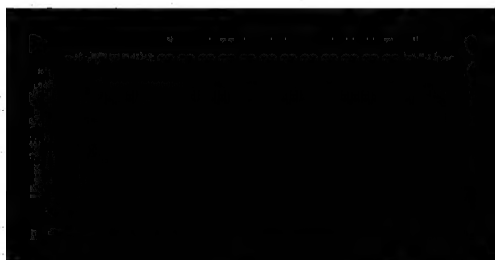
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CIA'S CURRAN
File photo

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I did, of course. Mr. Larry Curran is the local, four-state CIA talent-hunter, described by some sources within the trade as "your friendly CIA recruiter." Curran spends most of his time foraging on campuses in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota.

On the basis of informal time-and-motion studies he has actually logged more recruiting time on area campuses than the pro football scouts, who agree there are more potential CIA agents than coachable halfbacks in this territory.

Depends On It

Unlike his more bashful colleagues, Curran does not mind being publicly identified with the Central Intelligence Agency. His job, in fact, more or less depends on it.

"I'm an overt operator," he said, in the same simple declarative tone that another man might use in classifying himself as a Methodist, a Democrat or a non-scrambler. "Some people are covert in the CIA, and therefore need obscurity. I just happened to be overt as part of the job of trying to bring capable people into the CIA."

We rendezvoused at the

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Turn to Page 4A